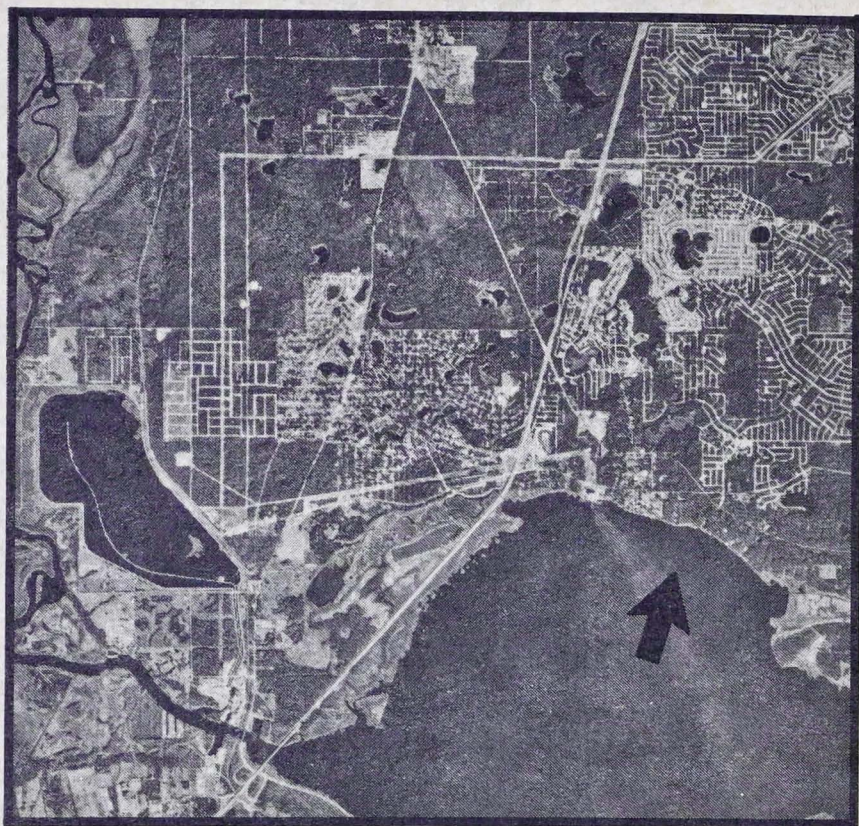


**Lake Monroe Wetlands
Archaeological Site Dig
at Enterprise, Florida**



**Dr. Barbara A. Purdy
Department of Anthropology**

**University of Florida
Gainesville, Florida**



*St. John's River and Lake Monroe
(St. John's River Water Management District)*

A Cultural Repository

The wetlands along the shore of Lake Monroe contain the records of a cultural heritage dating back thousands of years before European exploration.

Embedded in oxygen-free organic material just below the water table lie tools, art objects, dietary items, and human and animal remains -- evidence of civilizations that flourished here up to 6,000 years ago.

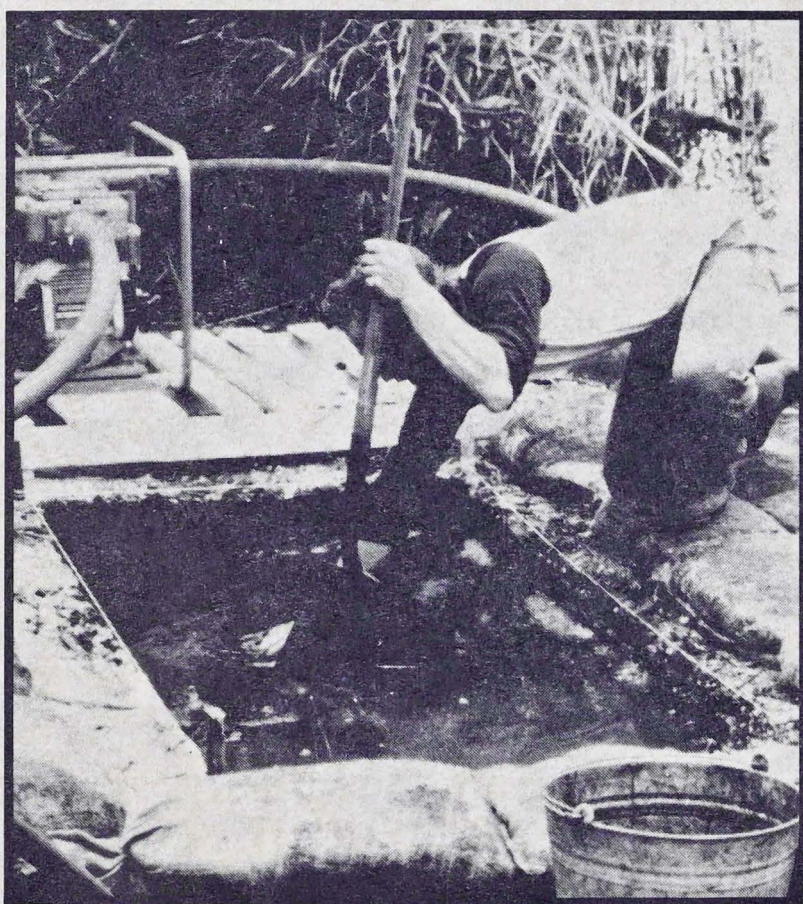
Unfortunately, the same watery environment that preserves this evidence keeps it hidden from view and susceptible to destruction by any dredging or development activity.

Preliminary Findings

A weekend expedition at the Lake Monroe site in 1989 recovered the oldest dated pottery north of South America (about 4500 years old) and the earliest known examples of squash varieties found in Florida.

Along with 50 species of animals and 31 botanical species, evidence of human remains was also found in the small one square meter study area.

The Lake Monroe material is estimated to predate findings at Hontoon Island to the north by about 4,000 years - one of the least well-documented periods in Florida prehistory.



1989 Lake Monroe Dig

According to Dr. Purdy the Lake Monroe dig "will offer the opportunity to document the onset of a way of life that lasted 5,000 years before the arrival of the Spanish in the 1500's." In addition the project will:

- record a 3000-6000-year-old environmental and cultural heritage;
- compare remains with those found at Hontoon Island to study environmental and social development along the St. Johns River;
- educate the public about the importance of wetlands as cultural repositories;
- make a contribution to archaeological science of worldwide significance;
- provide a model for wetland excavation techniques, methods of analysis, and preservation of materials.

Regional Significance

"This project has wonderful research potential and could be of worldwide interest; it could detail the beginning of a way of life developing around a major inland waterway."

-- Dr. Barbara Purdy

Discoveries anticipated at the Enterprise location will enlarge our understanding of prehistoric human settlements along the entire middle course of the St. John's River. In recognition of the importance of the project to the region as a whole, the St. John's River Water Management District has provided a seed grant for the dig.

Benefits To Community And Surrounding Areas

Community Involvement

The project will actively solicit community involvement and participation. Instead of using an entire crew of professional archaeologists, area citizens and students are being invited to assist the project as volunteers, and a wide range of applicants has enthusiastically responded.

Education and Area Recognition

Dr. Purdy and the Lake Monroe project have been widely publicized in *The Orlando Sentinel*, *The Daytona Beach News Journal*, and *The Deltona Enterprise News*. Her presentations to local civic groups continue to attract a large audience.

The project will inform the public about wetlands archaeology through newspaper articles, presentations to clubs and civic organizations, and local educators. It is expected to bring national, possibly international recognition to the area.

Personnel

Dr. Purdy will head the expedition assisted by a crew chief, a paleoethnobotanist, and a zooarchaeologist. Volunteers chosen from students and local citizens will be involved in excavation, screening, sorting, and recording of materials.

Renowned in her field, Dr. Purdy is a professor of anthropology at the University of Florida whose latest book, *The Art and Archaeology of Florida's Wetlands* chronicles discoveries unearthed in a dozen wetland sites.



*Dr. Purdy with cypress burl bowl dated 900
years old found near Arcadia, Fl.
(Kitty Powers, CLAS, UF)*

Your Support Is Vital

The Lake Monroe dig will not take place without adequate financial support. Contributions from area businesses, corporations, and individuals are needed to ensure that this project will go forward.

Your contribution in the form of a tax-deductible donation to **WETLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY, FUND #3693** will be greatly appreciated. Please send your contribution to:

**Dr. Barbara Purdy
Dept. of Anthropology
University of Florida
1350 Turlington Hall
Gainesville, FL 32611**

For More Information you may contact Dr. Purdy at (904) 392-4690 or (904) 392-2031 or call local project assistants, Edie Smith (407) 574-5577 or Lani Friend (407) 574-0553.